

JSA sanction advice & tips

SEEK ADVICE

Get advice from a Law Centre, Citizen's Advice Bureau or Council Welfare Rights service or a trusted adviser, if unsure of how to challenge a benefit sanction.



5 DAYS TO EXPLAIN?

If you miss an appointment, or fail to undertake a mandated activity, you have 5 days to give a 'Good Reason' explaining why. You can ask for more than 5 days to challenge a doubt if you:

- 1 need to seek information or evidence from a third party or
- 2 have an agent or representative or
- 3 have a health condition or other temporary circumstances that prevents you from replying (e.g. a relevant pre-existing health condition or caring or parental responsibilities).



GOT A SANCTION?

Ask for a 'Mandatory Reconsideration' within one month of getting the sanction 'Decision Letter'. Always ask for a written sanction 'Statement of Reasons' immediately and get an extra 14 days to request the 'Mandatory Reconsideration'.

Mandatory Reconsideration fails? Make an Appeal to an Independent Tribunal. Seek advice before submitting your appeal as it is vital to include the right things.



HARDSHIP PAYMENTS

When your benefit money is stopped, ask for an application form (JSA/ESA10JP) for Hardship Payments from your Jobcentre.



BE WARY OF THE TELEPHONE

If you have any telephone contact with the Jobcentre about your sanction, it is suggested you say you only intend to reply in writing.



HOUSING BENEFIT & COUNCIL TAX

Contact your Council immediately if sanctioned, so that they know you are still entitled to Housing Benefit to prevent rent arrears, or Council Tax/Reduction debt.



OTHER STEPS

- Get help from your MP.
- Make a formal request to change your Jobcentre adviser/work coach.
- Submit a Subject Access Request (SAR) to obtain copies of any personal data held by the Jobcentre/DWP or its back to work contractors concerning any sanction.
- Make a formal complaint and ask for financial compensation for any maladministration.



MORE DETAILED ADVICE AND TIPS:

- refuted.org.uk/sanctions
- jobseekersanctionadvice.com/
- edinburghagainstopoverty.org.uk/node/142

